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DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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550 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90020

April 17, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Roderick Shaner, M.D.
Medical Director

SUBJECT: **TELE-PSYCHIATRY BOARD UPDATE**

The purpose of this memorandum is to update your Board about actions following the Tele-psychiatry Board Motion, passed February 6, 2008, which in part directs the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) to collaborate with the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC) Behavioral Health Services Committee (BHSC) to draft policies and procedures that would facilitate the use of tele-psychiatry to provide prompt screening, assessment and treatment in non-designated hospital emergency departments in underserved regions.

DMH and the HASC BHSC met by special conference call on April 10, 2008 in order to review goals and develop a work plan related to the Board Motion. Participants reviewed existing DMH telepsychiatric guidelines that were previously distributed.

HASC and DMH agreed that all DMH policies, procedures, and guidelines related to telepsychiatric services should be identified and reviewed, and modifications or additions should be drafted as appropriate. The goal of this process is to facilitate the use of tele-psychiatry for screening, assessment, and treatment in non-LPS designated hospital emergency departments.

A workgroup consisting of selected members of the HASC BHSC and DMH will meet biweekly to carry out this task, and report to HASC regularly regarding progress. The projected date for completion of drafts is June 30, 2008. The Department will provide an update of the project to your Board by July 15, 2008.

Should you have any additional questions at this time, please contact me at (213) 738-4603.

RS:ebj

c: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Sheila Shima, CEO

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